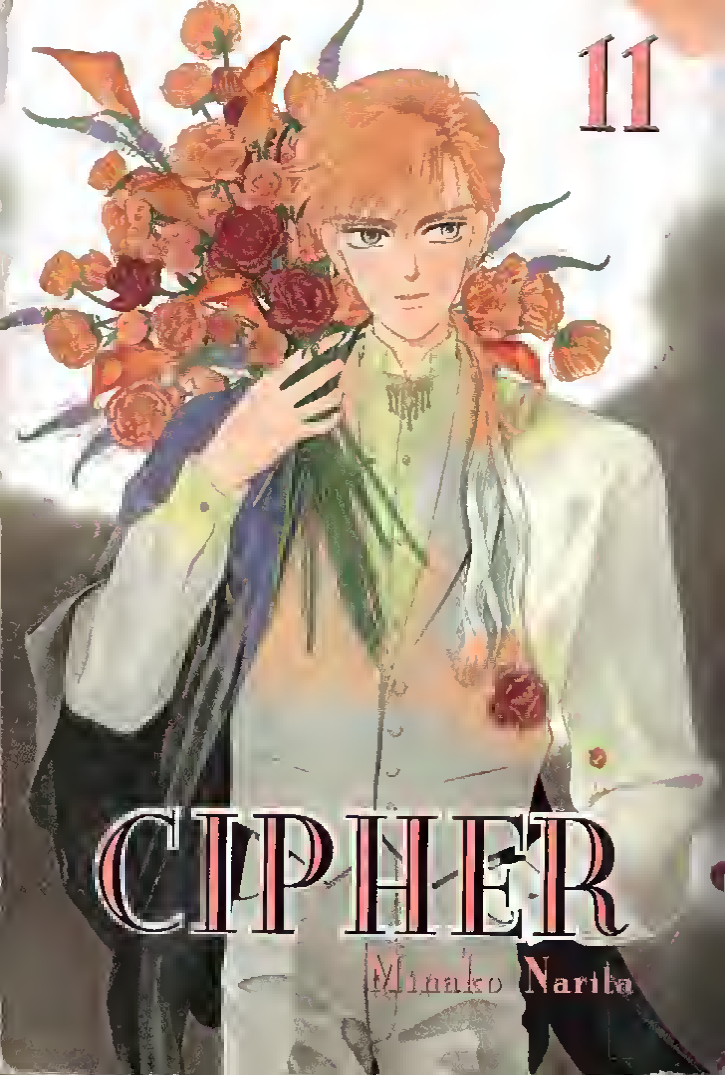
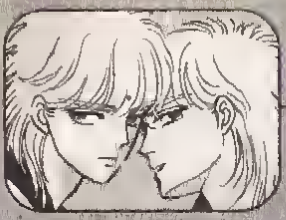

11
CIPHER
Minako Narita

WHO'S WHO IN CIPHER



Siva & Cipher

Siva (Jake) & Cipher (Roy) identical twin brothers made famous by their childhood acting success. They used to share not just a face, but also a single identity. Following the sudden death of their friend Dana Jackson, Cipher decided to move to Los Angeles and try to make it on his own.

Anise

Schoolmate and good friend of Siva (Jake) and Cipher (Roy). She was on the verge of taking her relationship with Cipher to a romantic level but it didn't quite work out. The twins seem to be drifting out of her life, while her feelings towards them grow increasingly confused.

The Story So Far

Cipher now resides in Los Angeles with a new roommate named Hal. Though Hal's personality is completely different from Cipher's, he has nevertheless proven to be a good friend and has helped Cipher to open up a bit. But while Cipher seems to have adjusted to life in L.A., he is haunted by dreams of Siva and Anise back in New York.

Siva's relationship with his new roommate is a bit more complicated. Siva has tried to use Alex more as a surrogate "brother" for Cipher, rather than a roommate with many of the same tensions as before. They also find themselves bound together by a new baby in the Jackson family, a girl who is also named Dana. Siva has dinner with the twins' estranged mother, who is surprised by Siva's paternal tendencies towards baby Dana.

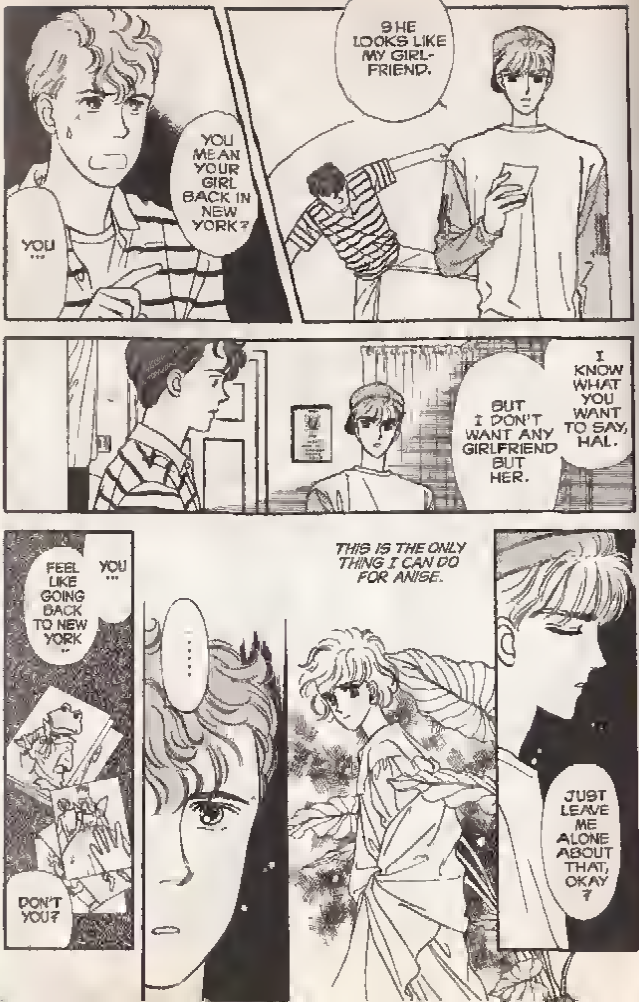
Things have gotten much more complicated for Anise. Although she's always had strong feelings towards Cipher, she made a very awkward request of Siva: she wanted her first sexual experience to be with him, hoping that it would help her get over his brother. But Siva declines and Anise immediately regrets her actions. So in a final attempt to sort things out, she decides it's time to fly to L.A. and bring back Cipher.

HAL'S BIRTHDAY WAS ON HALLOWEEN.
OCTOBER RUSHED BY, AND IT'S ALREADY COMING ON THANKSGIVING.
IT'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE...

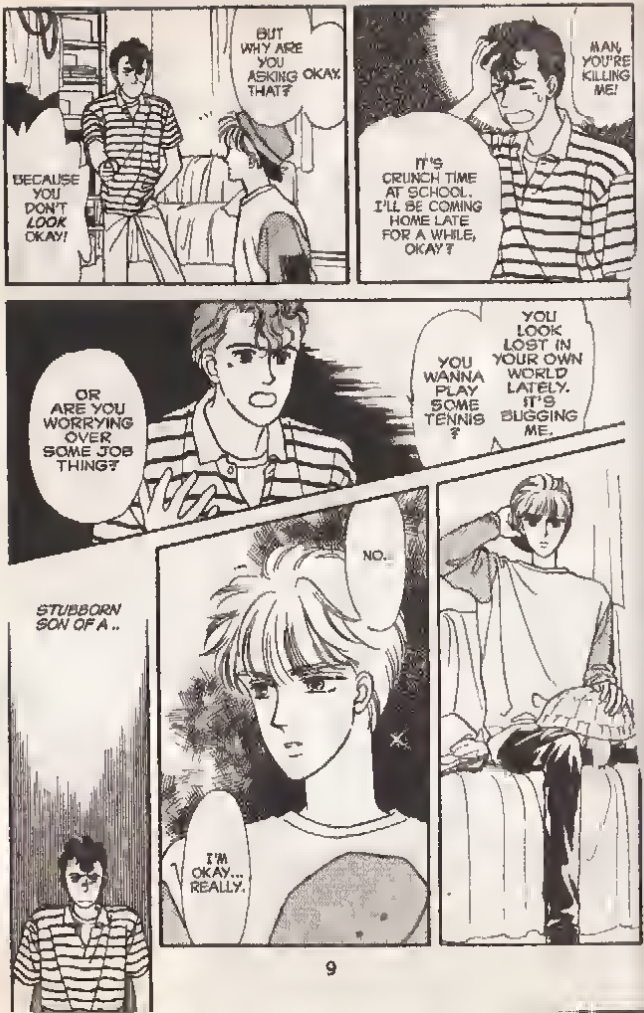
GRAAH
GOD, THAT'S HIDEOUS!
SHUT
WELCOME HOME.
WHAT'S UP, GUYS?
THEY'RE DONE— THE HALLOWEEN PHOTO-GRAPHS!
HEY... THIS ONE IS GREAT!
BWA HA HA HA HA HA
HEH HEH HEH
YOU TOOK PICTURES OF ALL THAT?!

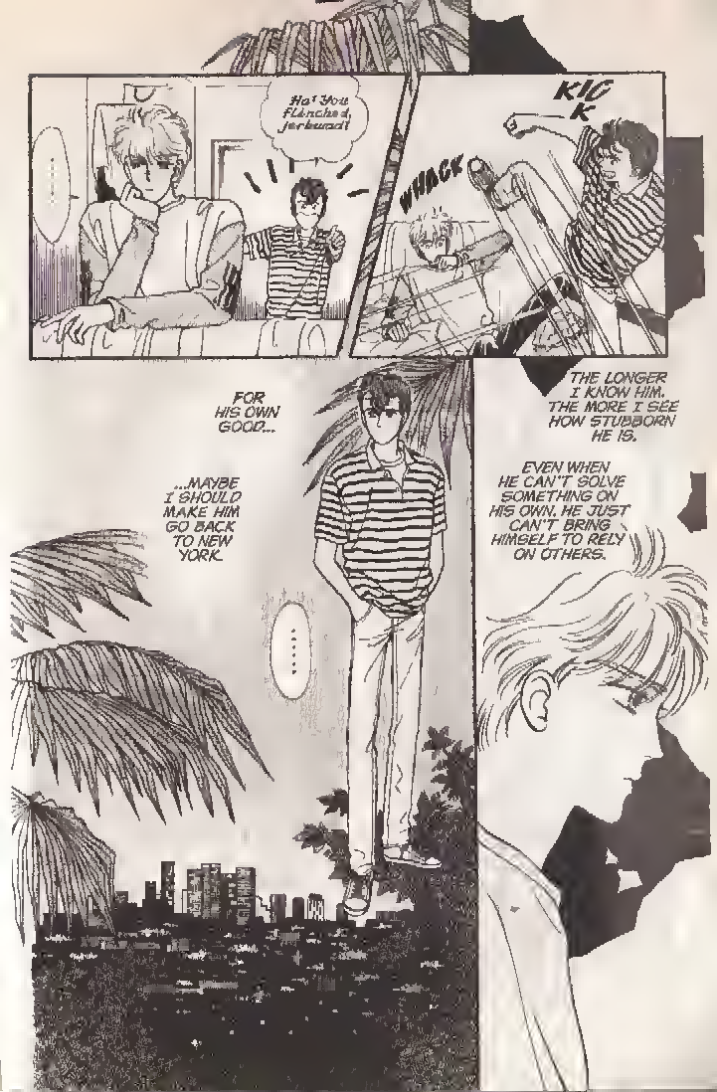
BWA HA HA
RON REAGAN!
Reagan makes it!
WHERE?
HERE'RE YOUR PHOTOS, ROY
JUST LIKE AN ACTOR! YOU PHOTOGRAPH WELL.
Hmph
IT GAVE ME A PLACE TO PUT MY BEER.
YOU WACKO!
DID YOU CARRY THAT PODIUM AROUND THE WHOLE TIME?
HEH HEH HEH
YOU EVEN MADE A SPEECH IN CHARACTER!
"When I act, I do things all the way."
BUT THAT THING REALLY MADE MY NECK HURT.
BWA HA HA
HA HA HA
Hey, cut it out!
Don't treat things on set!
AN ACTOR DISGUISING HIMSELF AS AN ACTOR... GREAT IDEA!
Heh Heh Heh Heh
STILL, EVEN HIS FANS WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE HIM IN THAT MASK.

WE'LL MAKE COPIES OF ANY PHOTO YOU WANT.
Gimme a pen.
Yeah.
THANKS. FOR HELPING ME NOT GET RECOGNIZED
DUMMY. WE ALL ENJOYED DOING IT. DON'T WORRY.
I GUESS I'LL TAKE A COPY OF THIS ONE, TOO
WHICH ONE?
OKAY
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE SOME-THING TO EAT?
PUT AWAY THE PHOTOS.
THAT'S A GIRL FROM SARAH'S DORM.
WHY? IS SHE YOUR TYPE?


SHE LOOKS LIKE MY GIRL-FRIEND.
YOU MEAN YOUR GIRL BACK IN NEW YORK?
YOU ...
I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY, HAL.
BUT I DON'T WANT ANY GIRLFRIEND BUT HER.
YOU ...
FEEL LIKE GOING BACK TO NEW YORK
DON'T YOU?
.....
THIS IS THE ONLY THING I CAN DO FOR ANISE.
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE ABOUT THAT, OKAY?

NOT GOING BACK TO NEW YORK I'M STAYING HERE
UH..
SO..
WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR THANKS-GIVING?
WHA^^
WHY GAMERA?! WHY DON'T YOU ASK ME?!
WANT TO HAVE THANKS-GIVING WITH ME, GAMERA?
WHEW
I SEE.
WHAM
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT! OF COURSE I'M INVITING YOU!
NO WAY I'M LEAVING YOU HERE ALONE!
OF COURSE! AND YOU, TOO!
OH, ARE YOU TAKING GAMERA WITH YOU?
YOU'RE GOING HOME, AREN'T YOU?


BUT WHY ARE YOU ASKING OKAY THAT?
BECAUSE YOU DON'T LOOK OKAY!
MAN, YOU'RE KILLING ME!
IT'S CRUNCH TIME AT SCHOOL. I'LL BE COMING HOME LATE FOR A WHILE, OKAY?
YOU LOOK LOST IN YOUR OWN WORLD LATELY. IT'S BUGGING ME.
YOU WANNA PLAY SOME TENNIS?
OR ARE YOU WORRYING OVER SOME JOB THING?
NO..
I'M OKAY... REALLY.
STUBBORN SON OF A..


Ha! You flinched, jerkwad!
WHACK
KIC K
THE LONGER I KNOW HIM, THE MORE I SEE HOW STUBBORN HE IS.
EVEN WHEN HE CAN'T SOLVE SOMETHING ON HIS OWN, HE JUST CAN'T BRING HIMSELF TO RELY ON OTHERS.
FOR HIS OWN GOOD...
...MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE HIM GO BACK TO NEW YORK.
.....

BY THE WAY "CIPHER THE VIDEO" ON LASER DISC WILL BE COMING OUT ON JULY 21. HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO SEE IT FOR THOSE WHO FEEL INCLINED *

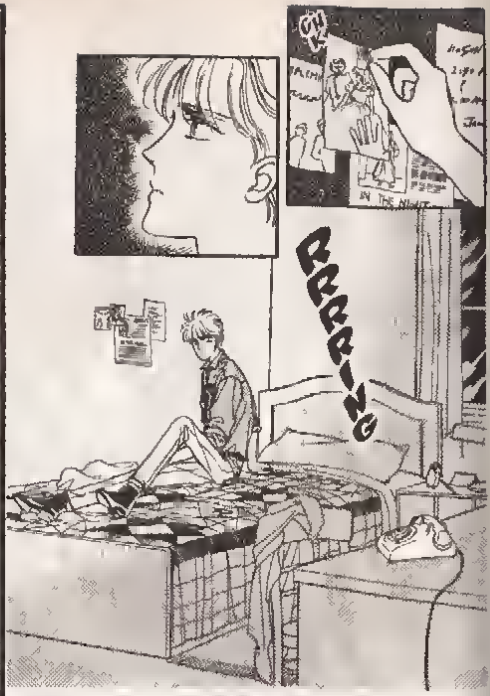
I THINK THE MUSIC IS REALLY GOOD. I THINK PEOPLE WILL UNDERSTAND IT AND IT WILL EASILY CROSS NATIONAL BORDERS. MANGA ON THE OTHER HAND HAS CERTAIN LIMITATIONS. IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN MAKE A MANGA FOR NELSON MANDELA. **

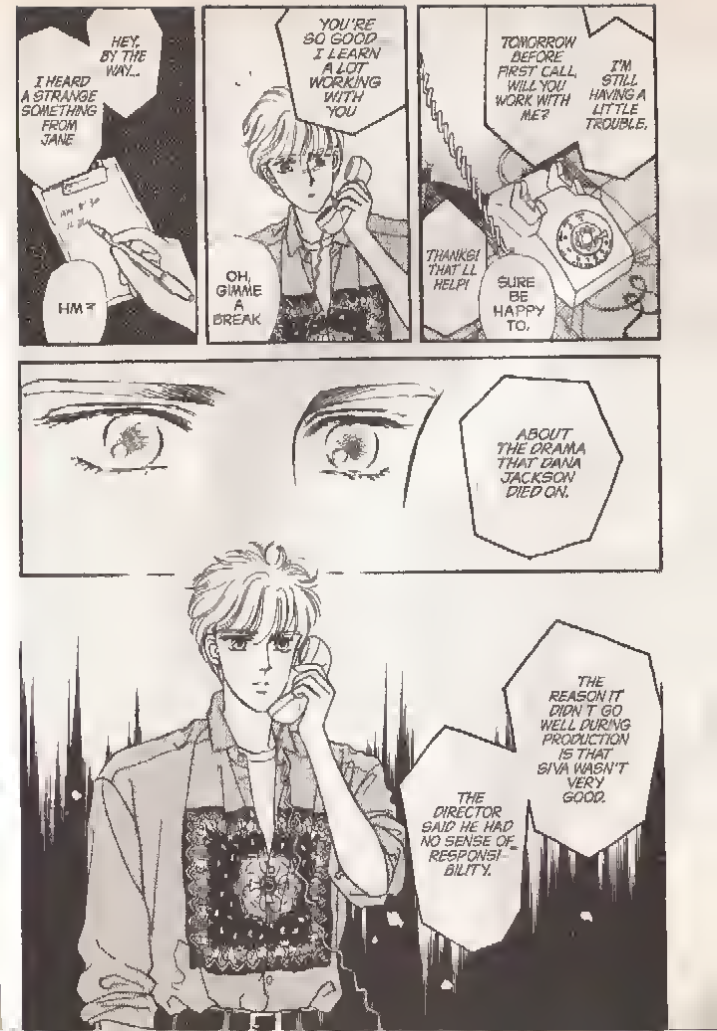
BUT AS I LEARNED ABOUT THE WORLD THROUGH MUSIC (I LEARNED ABOUT JAMAICA FROM REGGAE AND ABOUT VIETNAM FROM THE MUSICAL "HAIR") MAYBE MANGA CAN EXPAND THE INTERESTS OF EACH READER OUT THERE. MAYBE I'VE BEEN GETTING A LITTLE CONCEITED LATELY, IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO TALK ABOUT ALL THAT. SO I'LL GET BACK TO FINISHING THE LAST VOLUME OF CIPHER. HOPE YOU ALL ARE DOING WELL.

See You Again

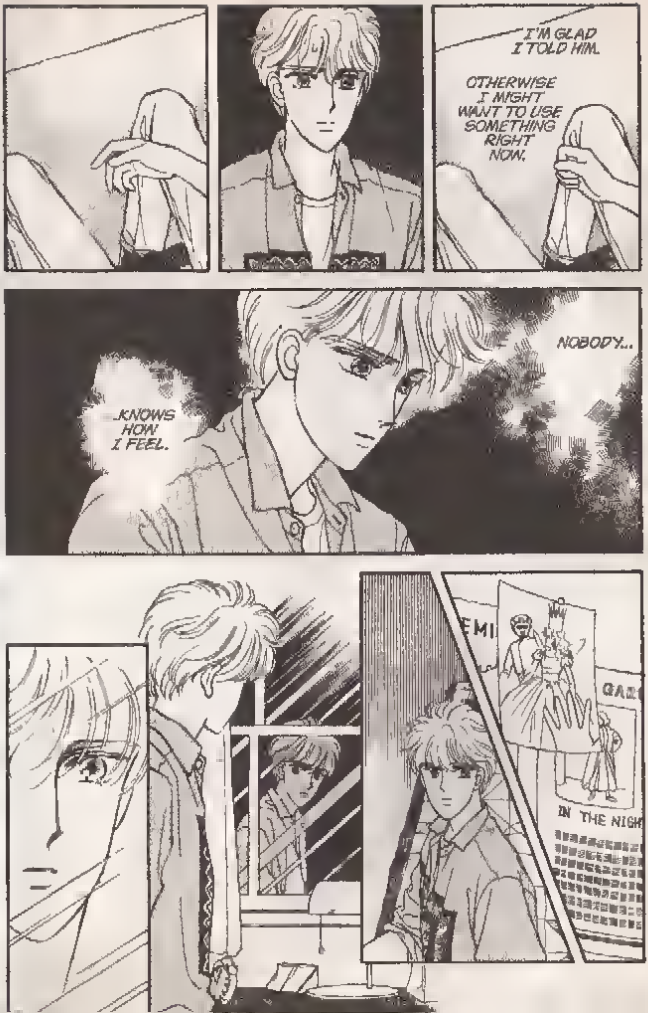
* AUTHOR IS REFERRING TO A DISC RELEASED IN JAPAN IN 1990 WHICH IS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE USA.

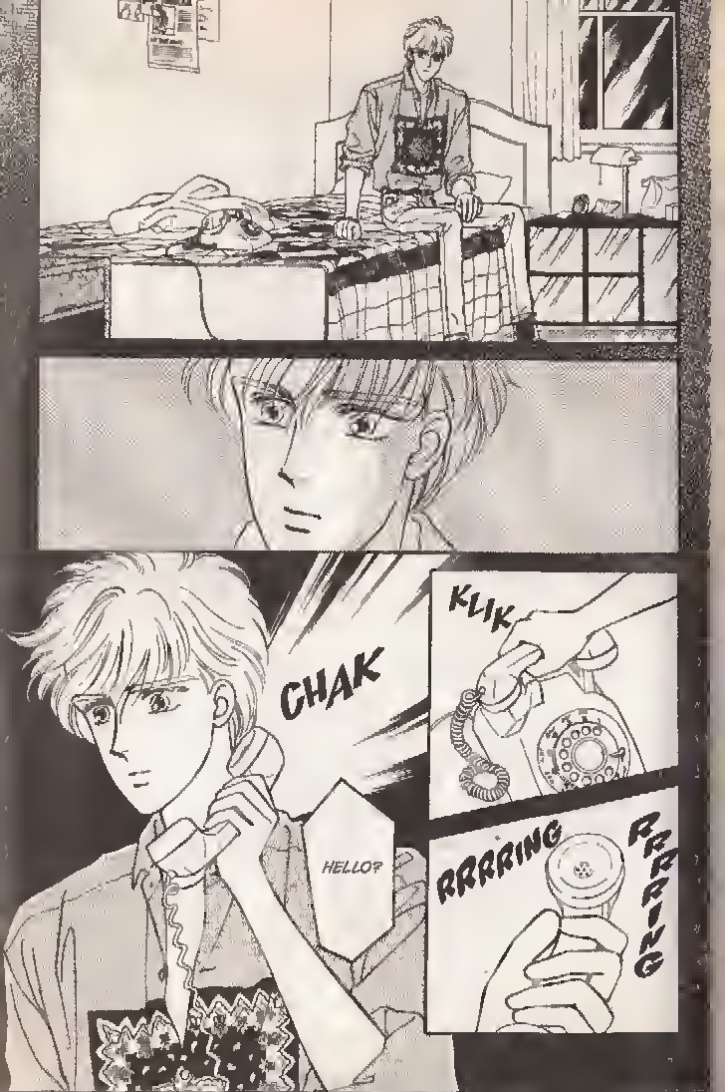
** PROBABLY NOT TRUE TODAY. MANGA WAS MUCH LESS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY WHEN THIS WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED.

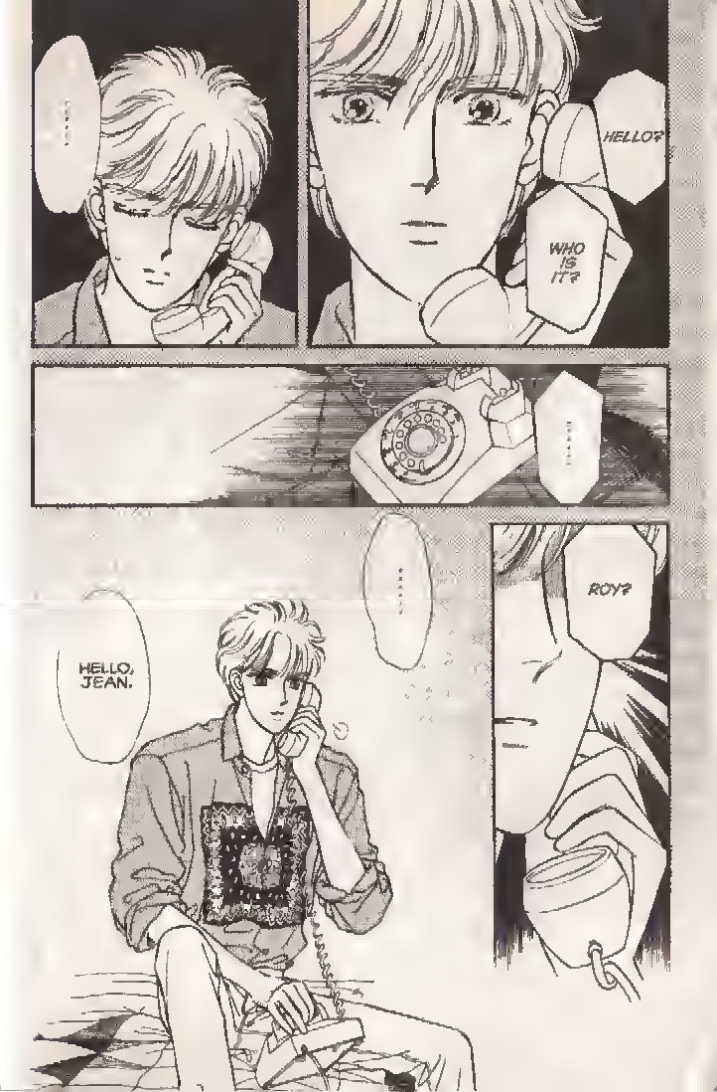



HEY, BY THE WAY...
I HEARD A STRANGE SOMETHING FROM JANE
HM?
YOU'RE SO GOOD I LEARN A LOT WORKING WITH YOU
OH, GIMME A BREAK
TOMORROW BEFORE FIRST CALL. WILL YOU WORK WITH ME?
I'M STILL HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE.
THANKS! THAT'LL HELP!
SURE BE HAPPY TO.
ABOUT THE DRAMA THAT DANA JACKSON DIED ON.
THE REASON IT DIDN'T GO WELL DURING PRODUCTION IS THAT SIVA WASN'T VERY GOOD.
THE DIRECTOR SAID HE HAD NO SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY.

I MEAN... SIVA...
I WAS...
BACK THEN...
I KNOW THINGS DIDN'T END UP WELL.
AH... HE DIDN'T SAY THAT SO THAT'S WHAT IT WAS
EVEN THOUGH THE ORIGINAL CAUSE WAS AN ACCIDENT, THE DIRECTOR MUST HAVE GOTTEN IT WRONG
THE DIRECTOR WAS THE ONE WHO FOUND HER.
BUT THE REPLACEMENT GIRL WAS A TOTAL AMATEUR...
KLAK
"I THINK YOU'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN."
"IT'S GOOD YOU QUIT."


I'M GLAD I TOLD HIM.
OTHERWISE I MIGHT WANT TO USE SOMETHING RIGHT NOW.
NOBODY...
KNOWS HOW I FEEL.
IN THE NIGH


KLIK
CHAK
HELLO?
RRRRING
RRRING


.....
HELLO?
WHO IS IT?
.....
.....
ROY?
HELLO, JEAN.

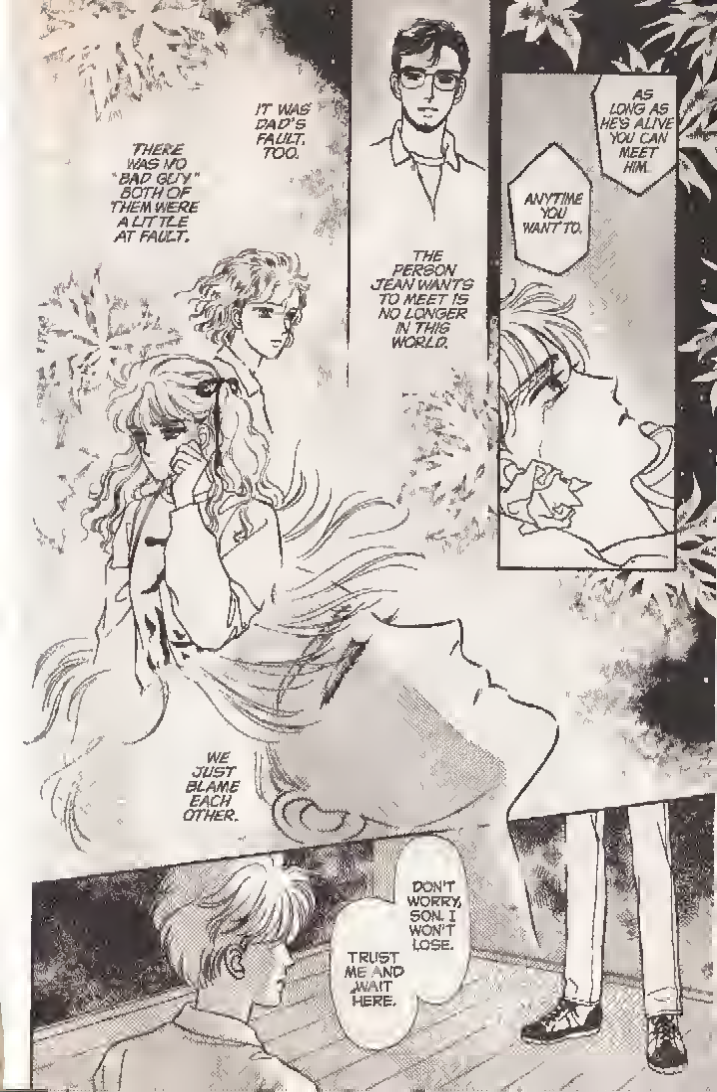
I KNEW.
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU.
SO...
HOW DID YOU KNOW IT WAS ME?
.....
IF IT WAS NOTHING, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE CONTACTED ME.
JUST STRESSED ABOUT WORK.
SORRY... IT'S NOTHING, REALLY.
SO WHAT IS IT? IS SOMETHING WRONG?
I MET UP WITH JAKE JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO.
EVERY-ONE SEES RIGHT THROUGH ME.
IT'S ABOUT JAKE, ISN'T IT?

NO.
DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING ELSE FROM JAKE?
YEAH.
SO YOU'RE IN L.A. NOW?
I HEARD THE DIRECTOR IS BLAMING ALL THE MISTAKES DURING THAT JOB ON ME.
IT WAS A SHOCK.
THAT THING I SAID ABOUT WORK BEFORE...
I...
...DID SOMETHING REALLY BAD TO JAKE.
THAT'S WHY I CAME HERE.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE.
I'VE NEVER REGRETTED BEING AN ACTOR AS MUCH AS THIS BEFORE.

ROY.
WHY DON'T YOU QUIT ACTING?
I CAN'T QUIT.
I'M ABOUT TO START FILMING A MOVIE!
THAT'S NOT IT
I'M SCARED!
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE I KNOW HOW TO DO!
I'VE GOT TO HOLD IT TOGETHER.
BUT... I CAN'T GET THIS JAKE THING OUT OF MY HEAD.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO MAKE YOURSELF FORGET IT.
IF I DON'T FORGET IT, I CAN'T DO MY JOB PROPERLY!

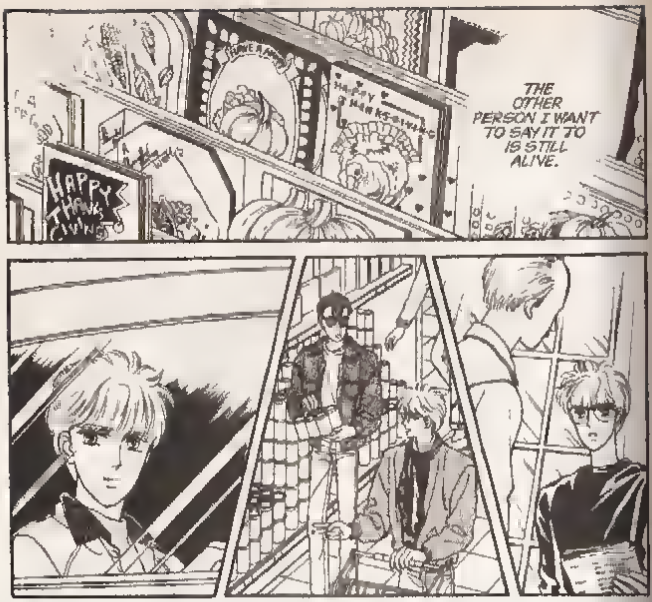
I DON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THAT!
NO, THAT'S NOT IT!
THAT THING WITH THE DIRECTOR HAS YOU THIS UPSET?
I JUST WANT TO SEE JAKE!
I...
I...
IT HURTS NOT TO SEE JAKE! I WANT TO SEE HIM!

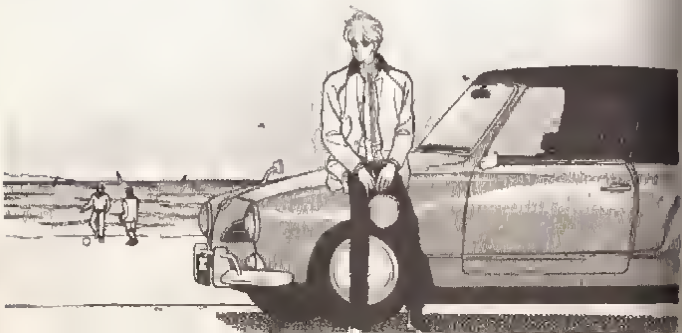
.....
ROY...
ROY...
HAVE YOU CALMED DOWN NOW?
PLEASE COME.
IF YOU WANT TO SEE HIM, YOU SHOULD COME HOME
I CAN'T SEE HIM.
YES YOU CAN.

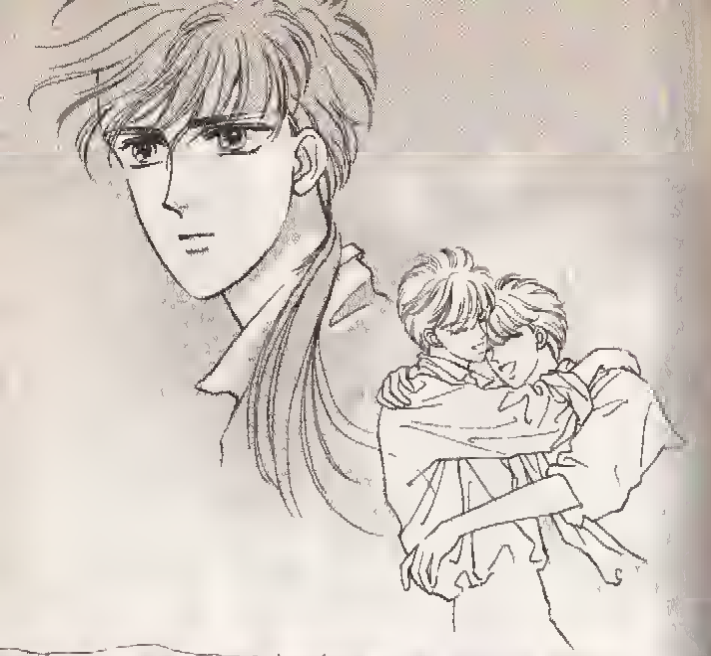

AS LONG AS HE'S ALIVE YOU CAN MEET HIM.
ANYTIME YOU WANT TO.
IT WAS DAD'S FAULT, TOO.
THERE WAS NO "BAD GUY" BOTH OF THEM WERE A LITTLE AT FAULT.
THE PERSON JEAN WANTS TO MEET IS NO LONGER IN THIS WORLD.
WE JUST BLAME EACH OTHER.
DON'T WORRY, SON. I WON'T LOSE.
TRUST ME AND WAIT HERE.

NO, DAD! DON'T GO!
IF YOU DO, YOU'LL DIE!
DON'T YOU BELIEVE IN YOUR OL' DAD?
I LOVE YOU.

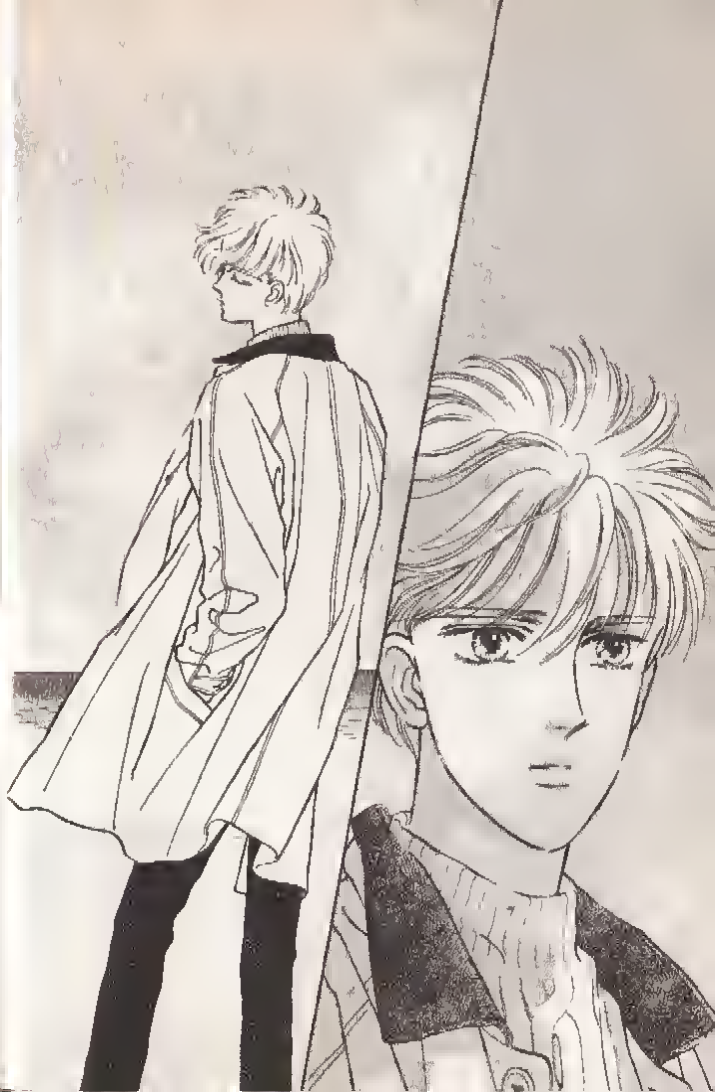
HE SMILED.
THAT WAS THE FIRST DREAM WHERE I HELD HIM BACK.
I LOVE YOU.

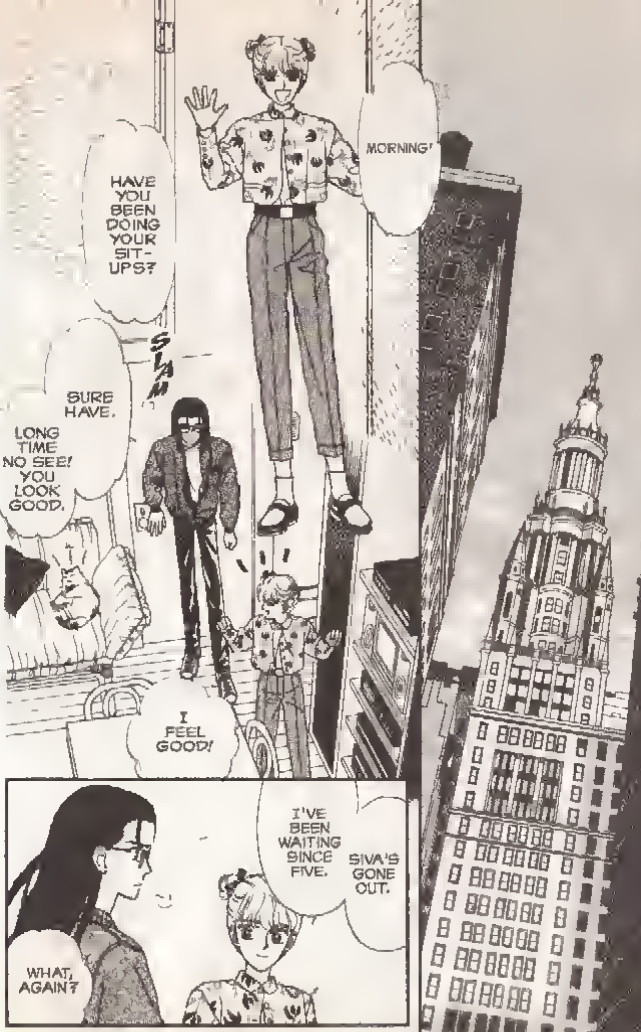

HAPPY THANKSGIVING
THE OTHER PERSON I WANT TO SAY IT TO IS STILL ALIVE.

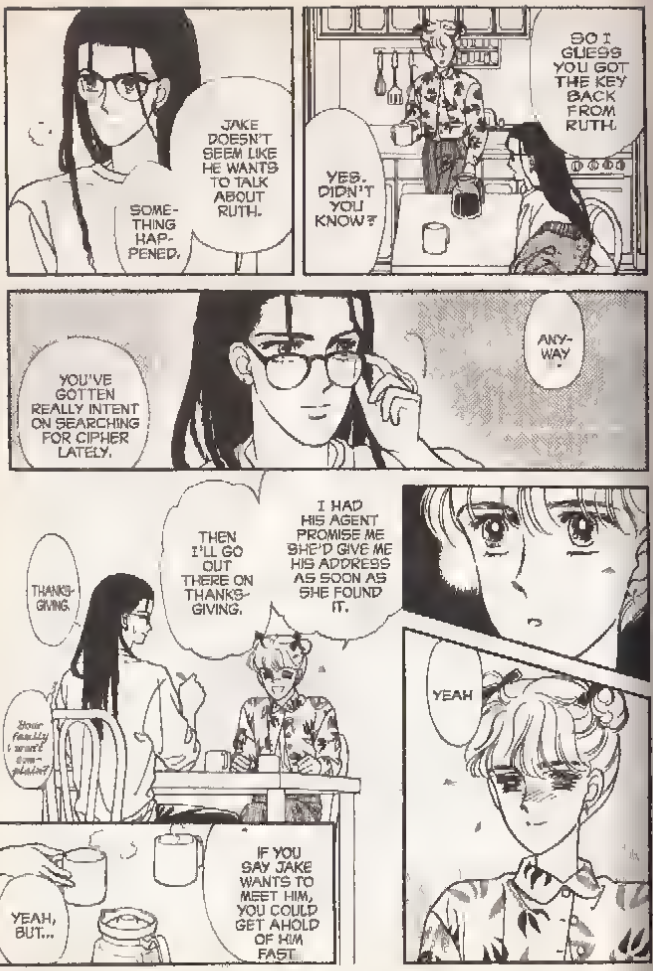




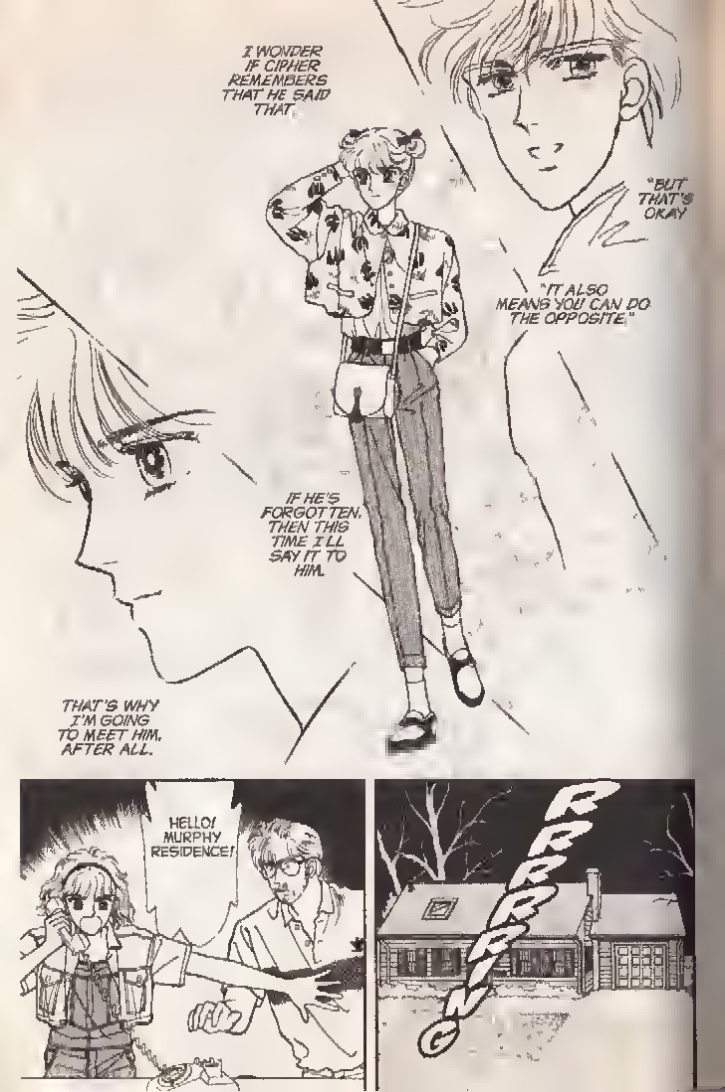
I WANT TO SEE HIM.



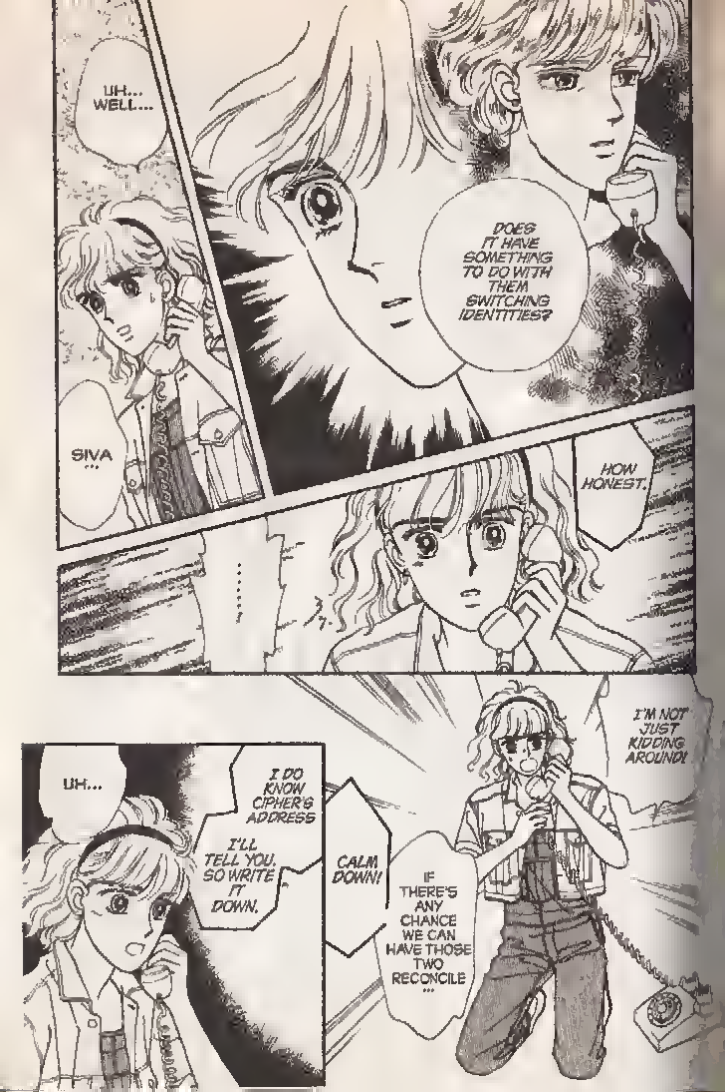

MORNING!
HAVE YOU BEEN DOING YOUR SIT-UPS?
SURE HAVE.
LONG TIME NO SEE! YOU LOOK GOOD.
I FEEL GOOD!
I'VE BEEN WAITING SINCE FIVE.
SIVA'S GONE OUT.
WHAT, AGAIN?


JAKE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT RUTH.
SOMETHING HAPPENED.
SO I GUESS YOU GOT THE KEY BACK FROM RUTH.
YES. DIDN'T YOU KNOW?
ANYWAY.
YOU'VE GOTTEN REALLY INTENT ON SEARCHING FOR CIPHER LATELY.
I HAD HIS AGENT PROMISE ME SHE'D GIVE ME HIS ADDRESS AS SOON AS SHE FOUND IT.
THEN I'LL GO OUT THERE ON THANKSGIVING.
THANKSGIVING.
Your family won't complain?
YEAH
IF YOU SAY JAKE WANTS TO MEET HIM, YOU COULD GET AHOLD OF HIM FAST.
YEAH, BUT...

THIS WILL ONLY GET SETTLED WHEN JAKE WANTS IT TO.
MAYBE I SHOULD KICK HIM IN THE BUTT MORE.
Hurry up and come home, Jordan! (Chibi)
IF CIPHER FOUND OUT THAT WAS A LIE, HE'D BE DIS-APPOINTED.
YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.
HM?
STARE
SLAM
YOU OKAY?
OH, YOU'RE HERE.
KOFF
KOFF
GULP
YOU'VE SURE CHANGED
BEFORE, DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANTED SIVA TO SOLVE HIMSELF?
"IF THERE ARE TWO PEOPLE, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY FIGHT."


I WONDER IF CIPHER REMEMBERS THAT HE SAID THAT.
"BUT THAT'S OKAY
"IT ALSO MEANS YOU CAN DO THE OPPOSITE."
IF HE'S FORGOTTEN, THEN THIS TIME I'LL SAY IT TO HIM.
THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO MEET HIM, AFTER ALL.
HELLO! MURPHY RESIDENCE!
RRRRRING

UH. IS THIS ANISE?
DRAG
DRAG
SPEAKING!
NICE TO HEAR YOU AGAIN! WE ONLY MET ONCE LAST YEAR.
I'M SIVA'S AGENT.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR CALLING
I'M SORRY ABOUT TROUBLING YOU FOR THIS.
NOT AT ALL.
.....
NO...
NOTHING LIKE THAT.
DID THOSE TWO TWINS HAVE A FIGHT?
I STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN HIS ADDRESS.


UH... WELL...
DOES IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THEM SWITCHING IDENTITIES?
SIVA ...
HOW HONEST.
.....
I'M NOT JUST KIDDING AROUND!
CALM DOWN!
IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE WE CAN HAVE THOSE TWO RECONCILE ...
UH...
I DO KNOW CIPHER'S ADDRESS
I'LL TELL YOU. SO WRITE IT DOWN.

I CARE ABOUT THOSE BOYS, TOO.
CIPHER!